

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRESS SERVICE



WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
OCTOBER 1, 1932 (SATURDAY)

190 COOPERATIVE DRIVES ON RATS SCHEDULED

One hundred and ninety county-wide cooperative anti-rat campaigns have recently been scheduled for October, November, and December in States east of the Mississippi River. County agricultural agents cooperating with the Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture will be in charge.

All the campaigns will follow a carefully prepared plan and will be based on the distribution, at cost, of a ready-prepared red-squill bait manufactured under supervision of the Biological Survey. The bait consists of three kinds of food, each mixed with powdered red squill. These are put up in sterile tin cans to insure their being fresh when exposed for the rats. Nearly a quarter of a million cans will be distributed, and the Biological Survey expects that the baits will kill several million rats.

Approximately 5,000 questionnaires returned to the Biological Survey by farmers who have cooperated in similar campaigns indicate that the average loss from rat depredations on eastern farms is \$40 a year per farm. The replies indicate that more than 50 per cent of the farmers cooperating in the campaigns obtained a 100 per cent clean-up of rats. The cost of the bait to the cooperating farmers this year will be about \$30,000, and the saving realized will be more than \$1,200,000, it is expected.

The migratory habits of the rat in moving from farm to farm and from county to county make control primarily a community problem, says James Silver, regional supervisor of the Biological Survey, in charge of the work, although, he adds, most farmers also find it very much an individual problem. County agricultural agents, in assisting with the control of this common enemy, have found the cooperative campaign the most effective means of combating the pest.

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